

Reasons Why Any Well-Prepared Job Hunter Should Run A 'Self Background Check'



According to a number of research studies, most employers 'Google check' applicants they interview these days. So, you know the drill. Before applying for a job, because social media is everywhere – including in Google search results, you should take a few minutes to clean up your Facebook profile (or better still make it private) delete that slightly misguided late-night Twitter post and make sure that your LinkedIn profile matches your resume so that when an employer Googles your name they won't be shocked or disappointed.

If only it were that easy though. Googling names is something employers do at the early stages of the interview process. Once they

have decided upon their 'final five' (or whatever number they choose) 80% will then order a formal [background check in Florida](#).

While most job seekers spend hours polishing their resumes and a small fortune on just the right 'interview outfit' most don't give too much thought to what might come up on a background check. But what you don't know can hurt you, or, more specifically, your chances of getting the job you want.

Do You Have a Broken Record?

Did you know that one in four American adults have a conviction or arrest record in their past? Or that almost all employers will decide not to offer a position to a candidate with a felony on their record, even a relatively minor, non-violent one? It's often very unfair, as the person in question has often made serious efforts to get their life back on track, but the fact is that less than half of US employers will give a candidate a chance to explain that.

Then there are arrest records. Maybe you were arrested but never convicted. Many corporate background checks only list the arrest, not the outcome of the case. The problem here is that many job seekers forget those arrests (they may be decades old) but unlike your credit report, where bad things 'fall off' after seven years, your criminal history is there for good, unless you take active steps to change that.

And speaking of credit reports, most of us know that those can be inaccurate. The same holds true of background checks. Even the criminal records held in the closest thing the US has to a national 'crime database' – the FBI Criminal Database – can, and often do contain inaccuracies. That's because those reports are created using records

pulled from thousands of sources across the US, and when you are dealing with numbers that big, even the FBI makes mistakes.

So, even if you think your record is squeaky clean, there's a chance it might not be. Here's an example to consider. You have lived in Florida most of your life. Your name is Sam Smith. Did you know that, according to National Geographic survey Smith is the most common surname in the Sunshine State? And with over 125,000 adult Smiths, there are going to be lots of Sam's in there too. So, becoming a 'victim' of mistaken identity is more likely than you might imagine as well.

With all of this in mind, what can you do, except hope that an employer does not run a background check (which they almost certainly will) Run one yourself, on yourself, before you start applying for jobs. With the right help getting a copy of your own criminal record report from the FBI is simpler than you think.

Once you have that record, you do have a chance to begin to control the narrative. You can talk to a lawyer about getting a conviction or arrest record expunged. If that's not possible you can at least be prepared with a formal statement that you can present to a prospective employer that explains the record. And if there is information on your FBI criminal record that does not even pertain to you, you can take steps to get that mistake rectified.

But you can't do any of this until you know what is 'on file' about you. So, as wacky as it might sound, running a 'self-background check' is simply common sense. And a great way to help ensure that you have the best possible chance of getting the job you want.